ESL READING STRATEGIES: MOTIVATING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO READ

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Abstract

Reading is an important part of second language acquisition in younger students. Reading provides students with new vocabulary, it improves their understanding and comprehension of the text, and it allows students to participate in classes. It is important to find the best strategies and methods to motivate younger students in reading as a central part of their second language learning. Teachers should not only look for such strategies but also find what best suits their own class, the needs, interests and motivation of each of their students. This thesis summarizes the research related to encouraging and improving reading in a second language, with a focus on English as a second language (ESL). It identifies some of the most important strategies for motivating young learners to read in English, and describes them in an e-book designed for ESL teachers: *Reading Strategies to Motivate Students to Read in English as a Second Language*.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my husband and family who have supported me during the whole process of studying abroad.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Abby Dobs because as my advisor she always supports my thesis process with great dedication, patience and good comments that encourage me to improve. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Michelle Plaisance for her willingness to help in every situation and for giving me and many of my foreign colleagues the opportunity to study an MA abroad.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Reading in a second language is always a challenge, especially for young learners. Motivating them to read and trying to keep this motivation over time is challenging for ESL teachers. Getting to know the students as much as the teacher can their background, their interests, their likes and dislikes, their home language and any specific information about them could make teachers work a little bit easier and could also end in a more meaningful lesson for them (Peregoy & Boyle, 2016).

In kindergarten and first grade, learning how to read is an essential part of those critical years in a traditional first language classroom as well as in a bilingual classroom. Learning to read gives students the tools to continue with their education and provides them with the needed abilities to learn any subject, as well as to communicate with peers from English native speaking countries.

Teachers know that every student learns at a different pace and probably with different strategies, especially in regards to learning a second language. Some students may feel more connected with some specific activities, while other students do not connect at all with those activities.

Reading in a second language can make students feel ashamed of not knowing how to pronounce some words, or because they could not understand what they are reading. This can also cause demotivation to read and to participate in group or pair activities with student's classmates "second language proficiency affects reading comprehension" (Peregoy & Boyle, 2016, p.342).

Students dislike often reading in a second language because they think it is too hard or confusing for them. It is the teacher's responsibility to change their thinking by building their reading confidence, which opens them up to being successful readers. Teachers can certainly increase their confidence and love for reading by providing them with reading strategies that will help them break down and understand the text or the book. By doing this, teachers are giving their students the tools to be better readers along with an interest in continuing their reading journey through the years.

Keeping a positive attitude is just one of the components to success in reading, not just with young learners but also with learners from any age and level; this applies to native and non-native speakers. Krashen (1994) recommends essential ingredients to read, such as "access to books, a comfortable and quiet space, modeling of good reading, reading aloud to students, variety of reading materials and opportunities for literature study" (Krashen 1994, as cited by McGlinn & Parrish 2002, p177). These suggestions are crucial for creating a space to learn and grow as readers.

My thesis project's principal aim is to provide teachers with ideas and strategies to promote, motivate and incentivize successful independent reading in English to non-native English speakers at school and, if possible, at home. The thesis project is an e-book focused especially on reading strategies which will be beneficial not just for the English Second Language Teacher community at North Carolina, but also for teacher education programs in Chile and abroad.

The ebook was written using the digital platform Canva. It contains 10 strategies with ideas for ESL teachers to incentivize students to read in a second language in kindergarten and first grade English reading lessons. Activities are focused on general strategies that teachers can use to motivate students, as well as specific activities to work

during the reading section of an English as second language (ESL) class. The e-book concludes with a reading lesson plan that details a 45 minute lesson for students at C level of reading in first grade; the lesson plan illustrates the strategies mentioned in the e-book.

Using the strategies mentioned in the e-book teachers will be able to adapt their current plans to engage students in their English reading lessons. They may incorporate some of the activities that were created especially to motivate students. In the same way, students will feel more connected to an environment that promotes second language learning by participation and support. Students will also benefit by involving and engaging their families in their literacy process which will have a positive impact in the acquisition of the abilities to read in a second language. The use of these strategies will empower students to participate in group or pair activities where reading aloud and sharing opinions or experiences is required.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Learning a second language (L2) is a difficult choice at any age, and the choice to do so needs constant reinforcement in order for the learner to succeed. Children and adults usually look for reinforcement in order to find motivation to continue learning, and this includes learning to read in L2.

In this chapter I briefly explain some of the reasons why young language learners may feel demotivated when learning to read in English as a second language, and how teachers can help them gain motivation and incentive and how teachers can make them feel empowered by the acquisition of literacy skills in English. Reasons are varied, as well as solutions.

Becoming a bilingual reader

Drawing on Nemati and Taghizade (2013), Derakhshan and Karimi (2015) wrote. "The optimal way to learn a second language is to learn two languages simultaneously at birth", (p.2113). Learning a second language through reading is one of the most effective ways of learning a target language, especially at younger ages when students' minds are readily internalizing their new knowledge. Once students start school "it is the teacher's responsibility to be a model for students and help them continue to value reading and become motivated readers" in their second language with the purpose of engaging them with literacy from a young age and creating motivation for reading through the years (Torres, 2010, p 15).

This challenge becomes a little more difficult if teachers do not know how to engage their students and make them feel comfortable on their new journey. “A teacher who cultivated a ‘bilingual interaction space’ in her classroom, and used teaching methods that went above and beyond traditional single language education were most positive” (Glazer et al., 2017, p.83). A space that promotes bilingualism can be a space full of words, charts, and pictures, with places where students can easily find words in the second language that help them create sentences to communicate. It is also a space where mistakes are allowed. According to my experience, a second language classroom that supports reading motivation is a classroom with plenty of books that incite students to read, accompanied by a ‘reading zone’ which is designed to give them the appropriate space to feel comfortable and engaged with this part of the room. When learning a second language, the process is full of mistakes, which can be related to structure, meaning, pronunciation, etc. and these mistakes should be allowed in a bilingual classroom to promote and create a confident learning environment that encourages students to not feel ashamed and work collaboratively with their peers.

Students who do not have a wide vocabulary in their first language or in their second language have trouble understanding texts, especially informational texts that usually contain more advanced words. This happens because students have to simultaneously process the meaning of both languages; their brains are trying to link the word in their first language to the word that they just read in the second language to find a meaning that makes sense for their reading. A helpful strategy should be choosing books that contain a wide variety of pictures. In this way, students can help themselves relate images with the text and find its meaning more easily. Florentino (2014) explains that visual thinking helps students better understand the ideas, concepts and words that are

related to images in a text “the majority of the pupils need to see photos and images of the information for them to learn it” (Florentino, 2014, p.1346).

A very important point to take into consideration is that reading materials available for students who are learning a second language must consist of a variety of easy books; this means that they should contain new vocabulary according to their reading levels in order to promote reading and not make it more difficult. These books need to be progressively more challenging in vocabulary and grammar structure. In this way students will have a desire to read and to improve their reading abilities making them enjoy and feel motivated by reading. It is important too that teachers plan their lessons according to these suggestions to promote reading in their classrooms and have more skilled and motivated readers (Bamford & Day, 2002; Brantmeier, 2005; Glazer et al., 2017; Loy 2008; McGlinn & Parrish 2002; Torres 2010).

Students may also feel demotivated by reading in a target language if they struggle with English pronunciation. Becoming a good reader also improves their vocabulary and their comprehension in the second language as well as in their first language. McGlinn & Parrish (2002) put forth the idea that while ESL students are becoming more proficient in reading they will automatically become more competent in speaking as well. One of the reasons students may feel demotivated by reading could be because of their still developing ability to communicate orally with native or second language speakers in a second language class. A good strategy to face this situation is to prepare activities where students have to interact with each other playing vocabulary or pronunciation games, in order to decrease shyness to communicate in L2.

Psychophysical Development

Motivation is a key concept when it comes to learning a second language. Shilova et al. wrote, “Motivation is the heart of the L2 learning process” (2019, p.1475). There are two types of motivation that can help teachers achieve their goals and motivate their students to read in a second language, if teachers recognize them appropriately. One of them is intrinsic motivation which refers to the motivation that students have based on their own interests and goals. The second is called extrinsic motivation, and it refers to external incentives that motivate students to accomplish their goal, such as rewards or prizes (Jahan Khan et al., 2017).

The reasons students get demotivated are varied. One of them is boring content, so it is the teacher’s responsibility to provide content that engages their students. Teachers should prepare their lesson plans thinking about the qualities of their class and the strengths and weaknesses of their students to create lessons that align with the students’ interests, which would then have the power to enhance their intrinsic motivation. Then students would be more likely to participate in that specific class and feel engaged with the content. According to Edwards (2009) motivation depends greatly on an understanding of the age/grade level of students in order to provide not only books but also literacy activities that will be appropriate for the particular group of students. This also “will promote intrinsic motivation” (Bilash, 2009, as cited by Florentino, 2014, p.1346).

Shilova (2019) proposed two more factors that can cause demotivation in a second language: memory and tiredness. Memory is probably the most important factor when focusing on the reason for L2 learners' demotivation, especially in learners who do not come from a dual language family. Demotivation because of memory occurs because

students frequently forget words in the target language, which makes them feel insecure and embarrassed.

Another factor that affects students' motivation when learning a second language is that students are tired. According to Shilova (2019), students who are having a hard time at home, or with another subject, or even problems with their friends, are more likely to feel demotivated in class. This is especially true in a class where the child's first language is not used, because this adds additional difficulty. Additionally, students' desire to learn and/or to go to school depends on their relationships with their classmates and with their teachers. These relationships also affect students' motivation to learn a specific subject, in this case a second language (Shilova, 2019). As stated by Wigfield et al. (2004), children's motivation towards not only reading but also other areas is strongly influenced by their experiences within the classroom.

Elementary teachers know that young students' attention span is no more than 10 or 15 minutes, which is why many studies recommend switching between activities, to offer brain breaks between lessons so students' minds can start over with the new activity and/or content. This strategy has helped increase students productivity as well and reduce stress in the classroom (Kuan, 2019; Torres, 2010). Shilova (2019) argued that teaching should be entertaining, emotional and a bit like a show to keep students' attention because children are easily distracted (involuntary attention switches)" (Shilova et al., 2019, p. 1476).

These brain breaks between lessons may keep students from becoming distracted by external factors. Examples of brain breaks are indoor recess, dances and plays that switch students' focus from reading for a moment.

Family Support and Involvement

Parent's involvement in a child's education, especially in their dual or second language education, is a fundamental part of student success. This involvement and support gives children confidence to continue their endeavors in the second language class. Families have a strong impact on children's second language literacy (Bedard et al., 2011). Children who have a strong parental presence in their education are more likely to adapt better to different situations and challenges at school and in life.

According to Beck and Pace (2017), "Education is like a three-legged stool, each leg of the stool is represented by the school, the students and the parents. This is a powerful metaphor for the importance of engaging families in their children's education. With a three legged stool concept, each leg has a different yet equal responsibility" (p18). It is crucial for L2 learners, in particular, to have family support, as parents can motivate their children to continue learning. Parents' support and contribution are not only material; they also contribute with something called *moral support.* According to Shilova et al. (2019), parents are able to give moral support by speaking with teachers about their child's progress, asking for advice, and spending time with their child. Bedard, Van Horn and Garcia (2011) highlighted the important role parents play in developing their child's literacy. They wrote, "Parents are the first teachers, learning to read for a particular child is contextualized within his or her family. All parents contribute to their child's literacy history" (p.256).

The strategies for motivating our students to acquire reading abilities that involve families in the process are varied. One of the most meaningful and important activities to support students is the implementation of a family literacy program outside school hours. Through a family literacy program, teachers teach families how to support their children with reading while they spend time at home, and also, teachers teach parents how to

introduce literacy into their daily lives (Peregoy & Boyle, 2016). Creating daily opportunities for literacy at home shows students that reading and writing are more than just school activities. Students could eventually start noticing that literacy is in their everyday lives and also how it benefits them, for example helping them communicate with others (Beck & Pace, 2017; Peregoy & Boyle, 2016).

Cultural Environment and Differences

Our classrooms have students from many different parts of the world, which means that classes are becoming more culturally diverse. Making our foreign students feel welcome and interested in a second language class is essential to success. It is important for teachers to recognize that these students may be facing different situations and issues. That is why engaging and creating a relationship with them has become so important. How can a teacher do that? According to Peregoy and Boyle (2017) there are three initial steps to create a nurturing relationship with students: first, getting to know as much personal information as possible about our students, where they are from, what languages they speak at home, who they live with, etc, second, collecting background information about our students prior to school; and third, becoming aware of some basic information about their home country, such as celebrations, foods, traditions, costumes, as well as parents and children's responsibilities. Taking into consideration these suggestions will provide teachers a starting point for where to begin working with their new students.

Additionally, teachers need to learn more about their student's previous experiences with reading. According to Harper and de Jong (2004) when teaching reading to young learners from foreign countries, it is expected that students will have schemas that differ from what the author of an English language text assumes they have. Some foreign students

could not be used to reading texts with pictures, or books in color. Some students could not be used to reading an actual book, or even they may be used to reading in dialects looking at pictures.

Also, some students may have gaps in their education, which will impact their acquisition of the background knowledge necessary for academic learning. These cross cultural and linguistic differences can cause confusion for students who may be translating a text from their native language to the target language. To motivate such students to begin with this literacy background and start reading and comprehending a text, it is necessary to work independently with them to align their knowledge as much as possible with lessons that promote reading comprehension, first in their native language and then the target language. As Graves, Juel and Graves (2007) argued, "It may be useful to introduce a strategy in a student's native language and use it with native language materials before helping students transfer its use to English materials" (p.291).

Studies considering L2 Reading Motivation

There are numerous studies about reading motivation in the first language, especially focused on teachers of elementary and middle schoolers, with the purpose to support literacy development. However, according to Jahan Khan et al. (2017), "The underlying components and influences of reading motivation are not necessarily the same as those of L1 reading, or language learning motivation in general" (p. 46). Yet, investigations about reading motivation in a second language are relatively new.

One of the first studies, Mori (2002), looked at Japanese learners. The study revealed four important factors that can impact reading motivation: intrinsic value of reading, extrinsic utility value of reading, importance of reading in English, and reading

efficacy. Jahan Khan et al. (2017) also suggested that reading motivation may be influenced by sociocultural environments and by student interactions in their social environment. Students' relationships with their classmates play a significant role in their reading motivation, as they may incentivize each other to participate in classroom activities. For example, when students are reading aloud or reading to a partner, they may seek and receive help from one of their classmates with some specific word, sentence or expression. According to my experience, this situation benefits not just the students who received their classmate's help, but also the students who gave help, as they may better remember the expression and gain confidence in their own knowledge of and ability to express themselves in the target language.

Students' motivation to read can also be influenced by their peers' first language (Jahan Khan et al., 2017). For example, if the majority of the students in a class speak English as a first language, students who are learning how to read in English may feel demotivated and ashamed to share their more limited knowledge in class. However, positive interactions with English native speakers may lend support to language learners and motivate them to talk in English, creating opportunities to practice pronunciation and communication skills, which in turn may help their reading. Ultimately, motivation to read in a second language is achieved through different ways and these may differ from one student to another; they could also change depending on external factors such as sociocultural environments

Use of Technology to Increase Reading Motivation

Students today are born into a digital world. Technology is part of their daily lives, and younger students do not even know a world without technology or the internet. It is

important to understand that when teaching younger generations of students teachers need to adapt to the learning styles of these new generations incorporating technologies in their lessons. This includes the use of electronic books in our reading lessons. Electronic books offer a variety of resources that invoke different types of intelligences. These resources include related videos, corresponding graphics, and audio recording that may be listened to while reading etc. New technological reading tools allow teachers to help reach more students, and enables students to learn through their preferred modality using a mixture of visual, tactile, and auditory modalities (Pogrow, 1990 as cited by Short, 2010, p8). A good example of this method is the reading app *Epic*. When using this app students have their own avatar where they can easily look for any book, according to their own interests, and the options are regular reading, audiobooks, videos about reading, talking books, etc. They could even choose which language to read in. Additionally the whole class wins badges for books read, so there is an incentive for students to use the app.

Electronic books offer a wide range of support for younger students. One of them is if students find a word that they do not know, they can simply tap the word and the meaning will appear. Besides being useful, this is a very interactive way to learn new vocabulary. Electronic storybooks hold the potential to help children extend their vocabulary, word knowledge, and concepts about print, and story comprehension (Short, 2010).

Conclusion

It is imperative that ESL teachers promote reading, since reading is one of the most effective strategies to teach a second language. It helps students with their comprehension, and it boosts their confidence to start communicating in the second language. Second

language reading strategies are varied; teachers need to know their students to identify the strategies that would work the best to motivate them to read by themselves in a language that they are not still very familiar with.

By understanding students' background and cultures, teachers can design meaningful lessons that incentivize students to continue acquiring reading skills in the second language. Activities where students interact with their peers are very successful in learning to read in a second language; it helps them not only to internalize the new language, but also to gain confidence and learn from their own classmates. Reading using technology is a good strategy to motivate students to read by choosing books, according to their interests and likes, from an immense library on the web or in reading apps for students.

Chapter 3: Project Design

In this chapter, I will explain the rationale behind creating an e-book with strategies to promote reading in students from kindergarten to first grade who are learning English as a second language. The e-book will be an extra resource for beginner teachers to use when planning reading lessons.

Reading is an important part of elementary instruction and education, especially in younger grades where reading is the spine of almost all learning. Reading strategies help learners pay attention to textual cues, integrate information, and improve their interactions with the text (Block, 1986).

The goal for second language reading teachers is to have motivated readers that are so interested and engaged in the story that they will continue reading after the lesson has finished. Motivation, itself "is an essential factor to engage students in being actively involved in foreign or second language learning" (Lopera Medina, 2014, p.91).

Yet, ESL teachers face a challenge when they plan reading lessons and consider how to motivate their students. Teachers, often on their own, need to look for solutions, ideas and strategies to implement in their classes and to improve their own practices. It is even more difficult to find a strategy that fits their students' needs when teachers face diverse multicultural students who come from different literacy backgrounds. The e-book, as the final product of this research, can help those teachers who are looking for new methods to implement in their classrooms, methods that will help their students to feel more comfortable, motivated and engaged with reading lessons.

The e-book introduces and explains 10 reading strategies for second language learners, which teachers can use in younger levels such as kindergarten and first grade. These 10 strategies offer activities and suggestions that teachers can take into consideration when preparing English reading classes to help students feel engaged with reading, inside and outside the classroom. They are based on the scholarly literature explored in chapter two, as well as my own experience teaching reading as a second language and the student needs that I see in my own classes. The strategies presented in the e-book are varied, to work before, during and after the reading, or to involve families in their child's literacy process and progress, as well as to promote peer support.

The strategies explained in the e-book are the following:

1. choose diverse multicultural books
2. choose books according to students' reading levels
3. work with books and activities in students first language
4. involve families in the reading process
5. encourage peer support
6. incorporate technology
7. read aloud to students
8. practice pronunciation
9. incorporate games to check for understanding
10. engage students with pre reading activities

The last part of the e-book is a lesson plan for a 45 minute English reading class at level C where some of the reading strategies mentioned in the e-book are used. The lesson

plan will be used during a guided reading class with a group of four to six students at reading level C.

Why do this lesson plan during guided reading? Guided reading is the most appropriate place to teach reading and motivate students to continue reading, where teachers can give individualized help, differentiated instruction and extra support for those students who need extra help (Peregoy and Boyle, 2017). According to Peregoy and Boyle (2017), readers use their background knowledge along with their linguistic knowledge and reading strategies to achieve the purpose of reading that is to comprehend the text; if they do not achieve this purpose, they may go back and read again.

The presented lesson plan should be used with the appropriate materials, resources and images to promote students' learning and understanding of the text to be read. It is also important for teachers to notice how their students work best and what they need to put more effort into their reading because not every class group is the same as another students. Every class has their own personality.

Chapter 4: The Project

The present project is an e-book that contains 10 reading strategies to promote reading in students from kindergarten through first grade and to motivate them to continue reading. This e-book was created as a support for beginner teachers to help them plan and organize their reading English classes in these grades.

The name of the e-book is *Reading Strategies to Motivate Students to Read in English as a Second Language* (Figure 4.1). The cover of the e-book also contains three questions which will be answered along with the e-book. This is the first edition of the Reading Strategies e-book which will be launched in December 2021.

The e-book contains 10 sections, one section for each strategy. Each section begins with a brief explanation of the strategy and its importance. In most sections, one or two web pages or resources to support the use of the mentioned strategy are included and additional information is provided to make understanding the strategy easier for teachers.

The link to view the e-book is the following:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAEtR1QNT1o/ZuNh7wbtwmDrW4uhUGLLNA/view?utm_content=DAEtR1QNT1o&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton#1

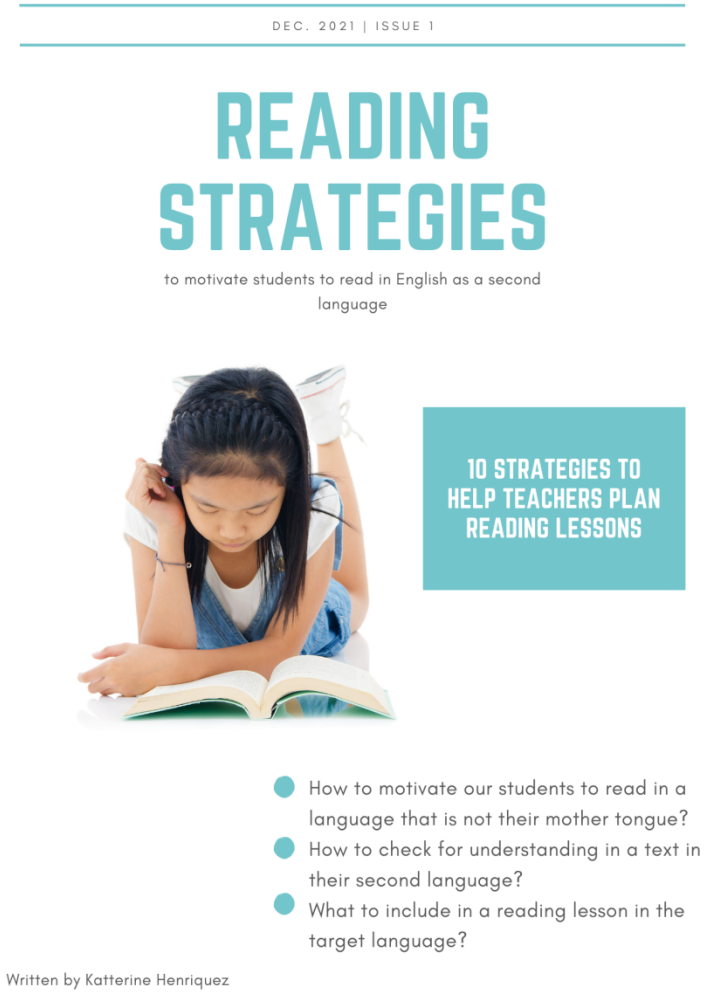

Figure 4.1

Strategy #1: Choose Diverse Multicultural Books (Figure 4.2).

This strategy explains the importance of choosing books that make our students feel connected with the story, especially if students in the class are from different backgrounds. This strategy is important because if students are connected to the story and the book

chosen by the teacher, they will immediately want to read it to learn more about the story. This strategy will also increase participation from the students.

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STRATEGY #1

Choose diverse multicultural books

Taking into consideration our students cultural backgrounds is something that could positively make a difference in our students willingness to learn.

Choosing books where they identify with the story or the characters, is a good resource to engage them in the first step of reading.

Where to find diverse multicultural books?

- Diverse Book Finder is a webpage that contains a big library with diverse multicultural books including publications about black, indigenous, hispanic, asian, african, arabic among other people. You can also find a brief description of each book https://diversebookfinder.org/
- Scholastics is a platform that also contains a big amount of diverse multicultural books which you can pay for. https://www.scholastic.com/

Literacy is more than knowing how to read and write; it includes the acts of becoming and of grappling with the world around us. (Freire, 1970)

4

Figure 4.2

Strategy number 1 contains a second page with six examples of diverse multicultural books that teachers can use in their classes, from books related to Asiatic culture to African and Hispanic culture (Figure 4.3).

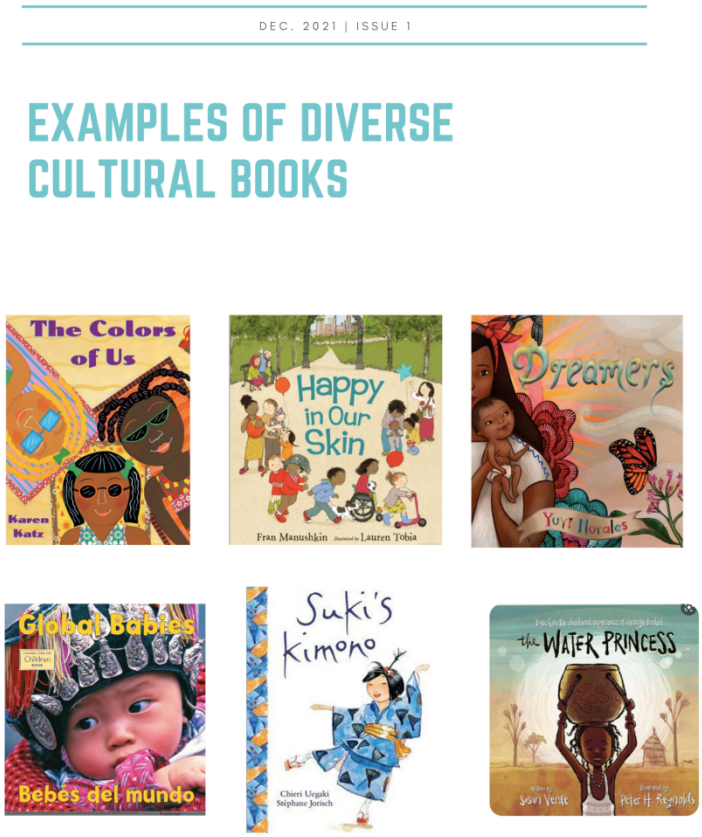
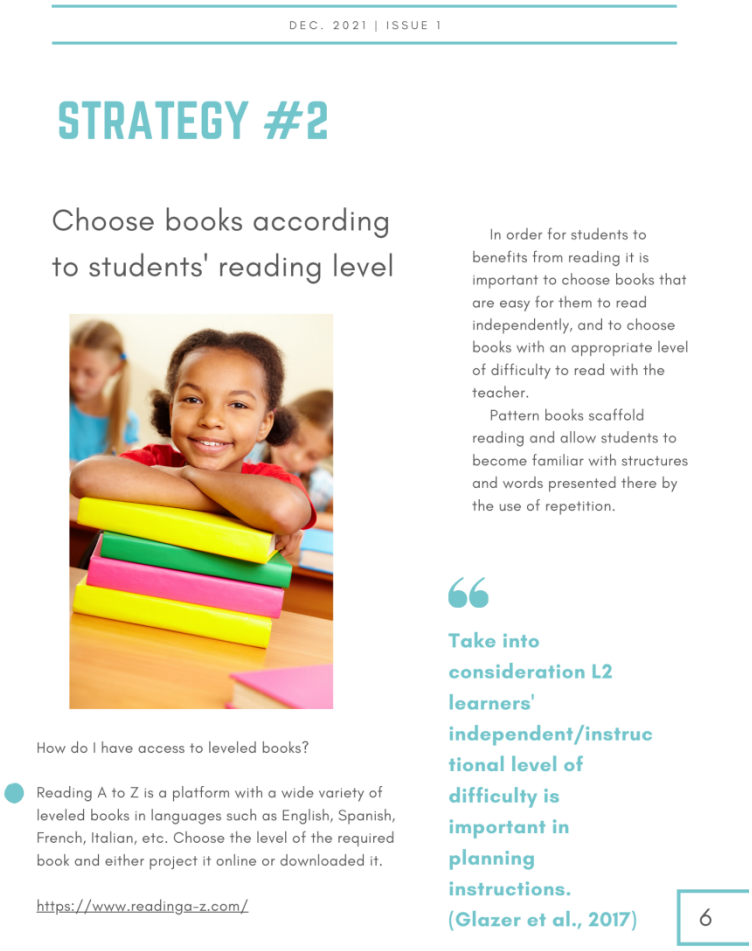


Figure 4.3

Strategy #2: Choose Books According to Student's Reading Levels (Figure 4.4).

This page explains the importance of choosing books according to students' reading levels and taking into consideration their vocabulary and grammar; in this way students can better comprehend the text. This page also provides a web page of a reading platform where teachers can choose books from an enormous online library, separated by reading levels and

levels of difficulty. Teachers can easily look for the desired reading level, choose, print and work with a quality book offered. Teachers can use this platform by paying an annual fee.



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STRATEGY #2

Choose books according to students' reading level

In order for students to benefits from reading it is important to choose books that are easy for them to read independently, and to choose books with an appropriate level of difficulty to read with the teacher.

Pattern books scaffold reading and allow students to become familiar with structures and words presented there by the use of repetition.

How do I have access to leveled books?

Reading A to Z is a platform with a wide variety of leveled books in languages such as English, Spanish, French, Italian, etc. Choose the level of the required book and either project it online or downloaded it.

https://www.readinga-z.com/

Take into consideration L2 learners' independent/instructional level of difficulty is important in planning instructions. (Glazer et al., 2017)

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Figure 4.4

The second page discussing strategy number 2 (Figure 4.5) shows an example of what a leveled book looks like. This book from the platform Reading A to Z is a book level

aa, which as the lowest level, targets students who are just beginning to read. Reading levels start at level aa being the lower level for starters readers, after level aa we pass through level A to Z2, being level Z2 the most advanced level in reading.

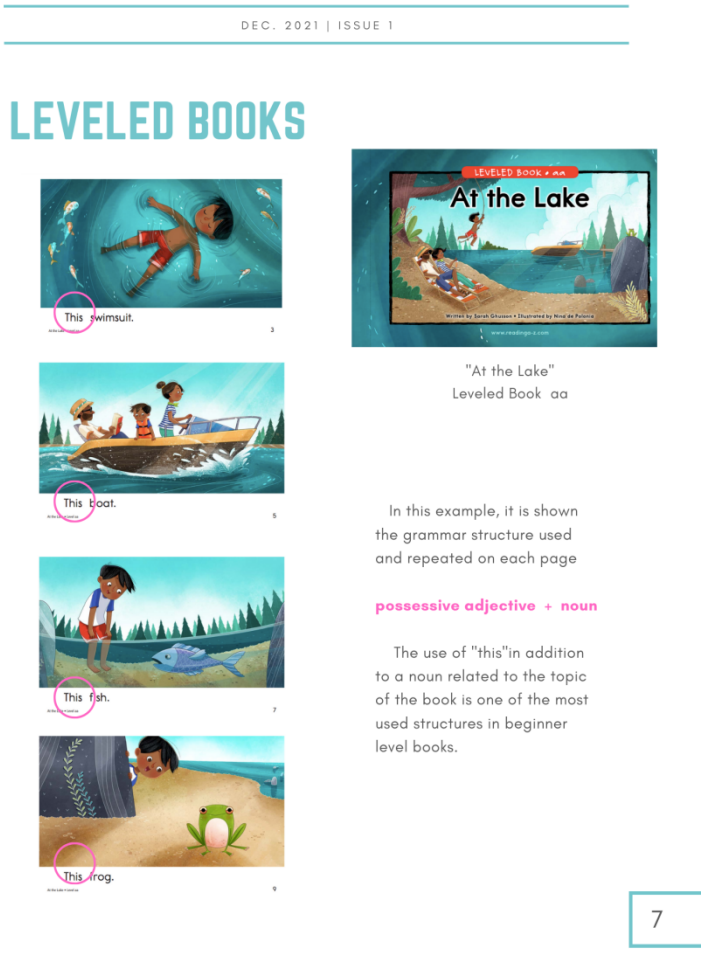
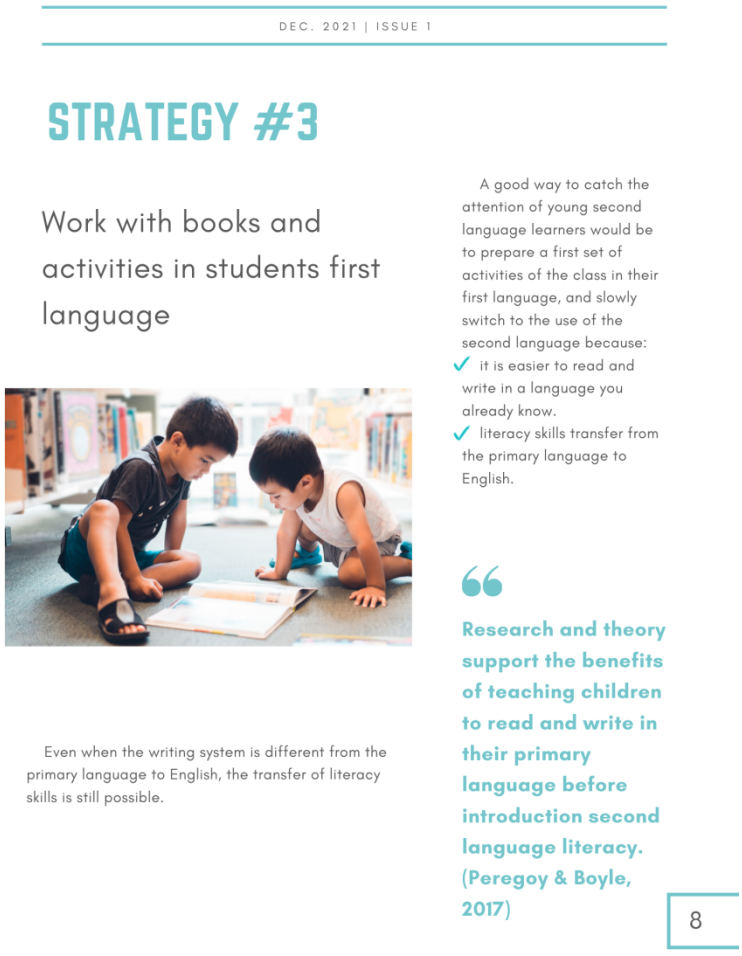


Figure 4.5

Strategy #3: Work with Books and Activities in Student's First Language (Figure 4.6).

This strategy shows the importance of understanding that working in students' first language to help them connect with the reading and to find a sense of it is sometimes the better strategy. How would this work? Teachers help students read and understand the text in the student's first language first; afterward, they read the same text in English, helping them make connections and find a sense of the reading. This strategy is supported by Peregoy and Boyle (2017), who stated that by doing this, teachers support the benefits of reading in the second language.



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STRATEGY #3

Work with books and activities in students first language

A good way to catch the attention of young second language learners would be to prepare a first set of activities of the class in their first language, and slowly switch to the use of the second language because:

- ✓ it is easier to read and write in a language you already know.
- ✓ literacy skills transfer from the primary language to English.

Even when the writing system is different from the primary language to English, the transfer of literacy skills is still possible.

Research and theory support the benefits of teaching children to read and write in their primary language before introduction second language literacy. (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

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Figure 4.6

A second page for strategy number 3 is included (Figure 4.7), and it provides an example of a bilingual book, which can be used to provide literature to students in their first and second languages.

Figure 4.7

Strategy #4: Involve Families in the Reading Process (Figure 4.8).

This strategy is crucial for students and the development of their reading skills because it establishes reading as something to do every day. Involving families will help students understand that reading is an important part of life and it benefits them every day to be able to communicate with the rest of the world. The information shown in this page gives teachers the

opportunity to promote a family literacy program with parents from their class that help students feel engaged with everyday literacy activities.

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STRATEGY #4

Involve families in the reading process

The implementation of Literacy Programs with families has become a successful strategy to involve families into their children's education.

During these sessions parents are encouraged to:

- ✓ read with their children
- ✓ listen to their children read
- ✓ talk about homework and school concerns with their children
- ✓ involve children in literacy-related home activities, such as cooking, writing notes,, and marking the calendar for special events.

Family Literacy Federal Funds
Federal and State governments have been supporting Family Literacy Programs integrating adult education with early childhood and parent education.
You can find more information about your state in the link below.

https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/f14.html

Children who are read to at home tend to achieve better when they go to school.
(Wells, 1986)

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Figure 4.8

This page shows how important it is to include parents in their child's education and how to promote this involvement. It also offers a web page created by the U.S Department of Education where parents can look for literacy programs in their states. This web page also explains to parents why literacy programs that involve parents are important and meaningful for their child's education.

This strategy also has two extra pages. The first one uses pictures to show who can participate in family literacy programs (Figure 4.9), and the second page lists examples of how family members can help their child at home with daily literacy activities (Figure 4.10).

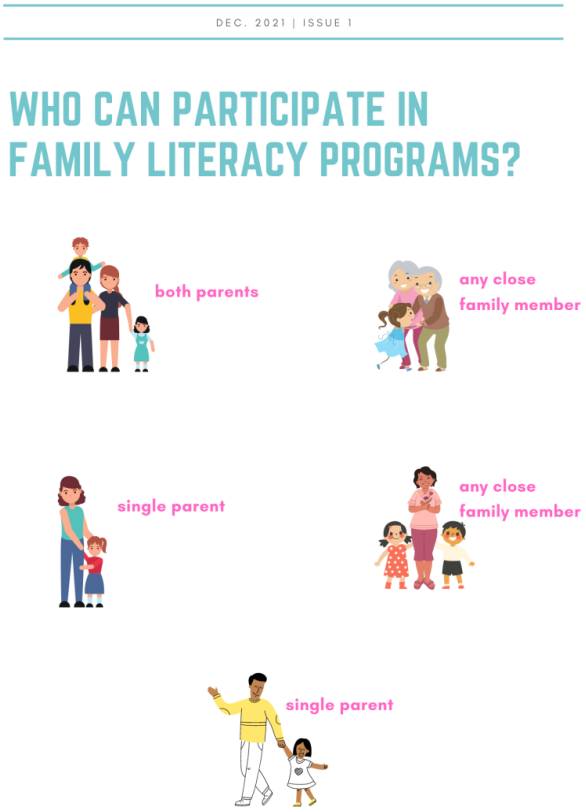
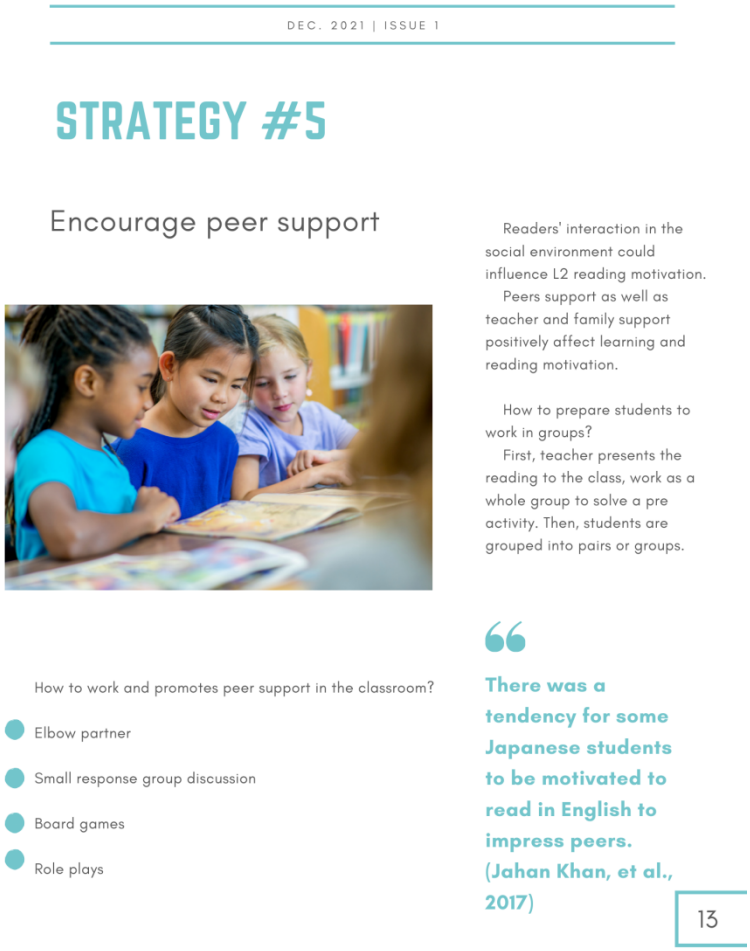


Figure 4.9

Figure 4.10

Strategy #5: Encourage peer support (Figure 4.11).

This strategy explains how teachers can promote peer support in the classroom, how this support motivates students to continue with activities, and how students gain confidence through the support of their classmates, especially when reading in a second language. At the end of the page there are some ideas for how to group students to work to promote reading.



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STRATEGY #5

Encourage peer support

Readers' interaction in the social environment could influence L2 reading motivation.
Peers support as well as teacher and family support positively affect learning and reading motivation.

How to prepare students to work in groups?
First, teacher presents the reading to the class, work as a whole group to solve a pre activity. Then, students are grouped into pairs or groups.

How to work and promotes peer support in the classroom?

- Elbow partner
- Small response group discussion
- Board games
- Role plays

"There was a tendency for some Japanese students to be motivated to read in English to impress peers. (Jahan Khan, et al., 2017)

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Figure 4.11

Strategy #6: Incorporate technology (Figure 4.12).

This page explains why including technology in reading lessons has become an important resource in today's lessons, and how to use it to engage students and make them feel motivated reading using an electronic device. At the bottom of the page there are two online platforms used by teachers in their reading classes that include not only books but

also audiobooks, videos, stories and collections of books available online for students (Figure 4.13).

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STRATEGY #6

Incorporate technology

Online readings offers several opportunities to scaffold learning with a click of distance, such as:

- pictures
- audio
- music
- videos
- translation from any language to English

Online reading apps with leveled books for kindergarten and first grade students are available in the web. Two of them are:

- epic!
  https://www.getepic.com/
- Razkids
  https://www.readinga-z.com/

Internet reading requires some skills that are different from those used when reading a book. It requires greater cognitive involvement and critical thinking. (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

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Figure 4.12

The next two pages show what the online reading platform *Epic!* looks like for teachers. At the bottom of Figure 4.14 there is a “Reading Caterpillar” featured by *Epic!*. This is a fun way for students to see their progress, and it motivates them to contribute to the class goal that is to complete the caterpillar.

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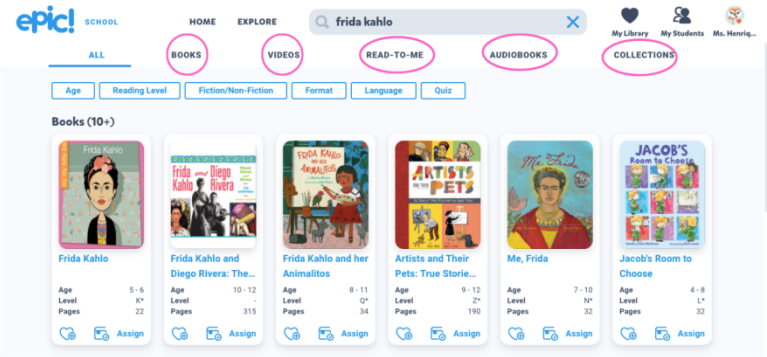
WHAT KIND OF BOOKS CAN I FIND IN A READING APP?



Students can easily find :

*books
*videos
*read to me books
*audiobooks
*collection of books

Figure 4.13

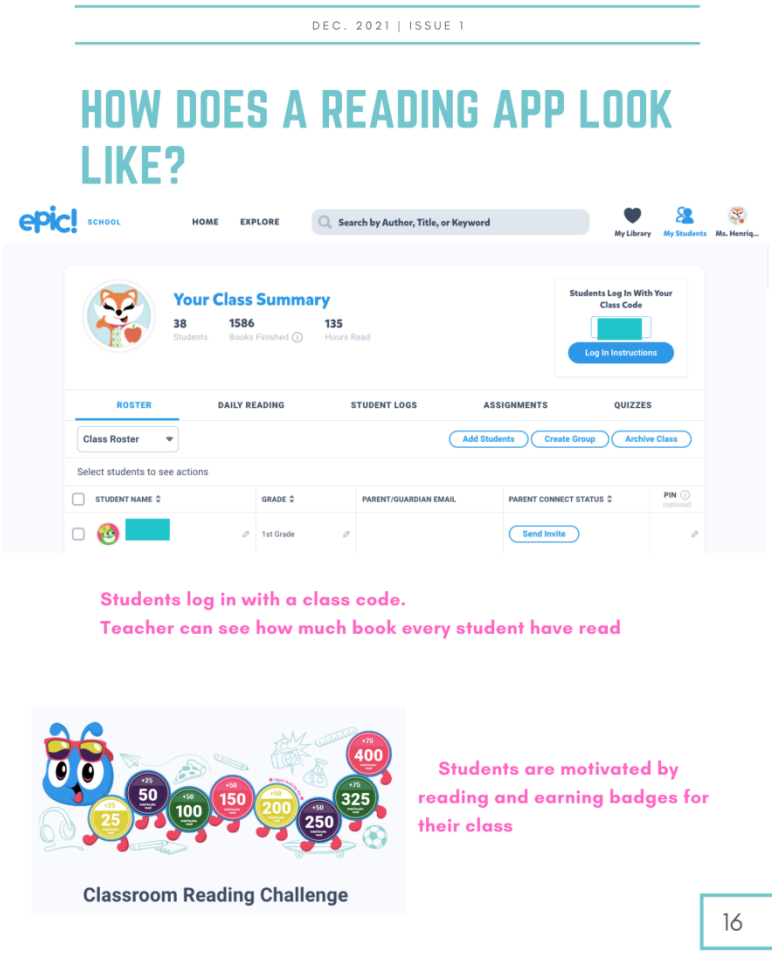


Figure 4.14

Strategy #7: Read aloud to students (Figure 4.15).

This page explains how reading aloud is beneficial for students of all ages, especially for younger students. The use of big books during read alouds is beneficial for students because it helps them understand how a book is organized, and it allows them to ask and answer questions while looking at it.

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STRATEGY #7

Read aloud to students

Reading is beneficial for all students. When reading aloud, teacher develop general literacy knowledge such as, characters, scenario, pictures, etc. Teacher can also help students' comprehension of the book by asking questions before reading the book and making predictions, stopping and talking about certain parts of the book, etc.

Teacher should make sure to choose adequate books that students can understand according to their level

Big books are an excellent resource to use during teacher reading aloud.

"The reading aloud moments should be a special time when students feel comfortable to simply sit and enjoy listening stories".(Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

Big books full of rhythm, and interesting sequences motivate students to see reading as fun and interesting. (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

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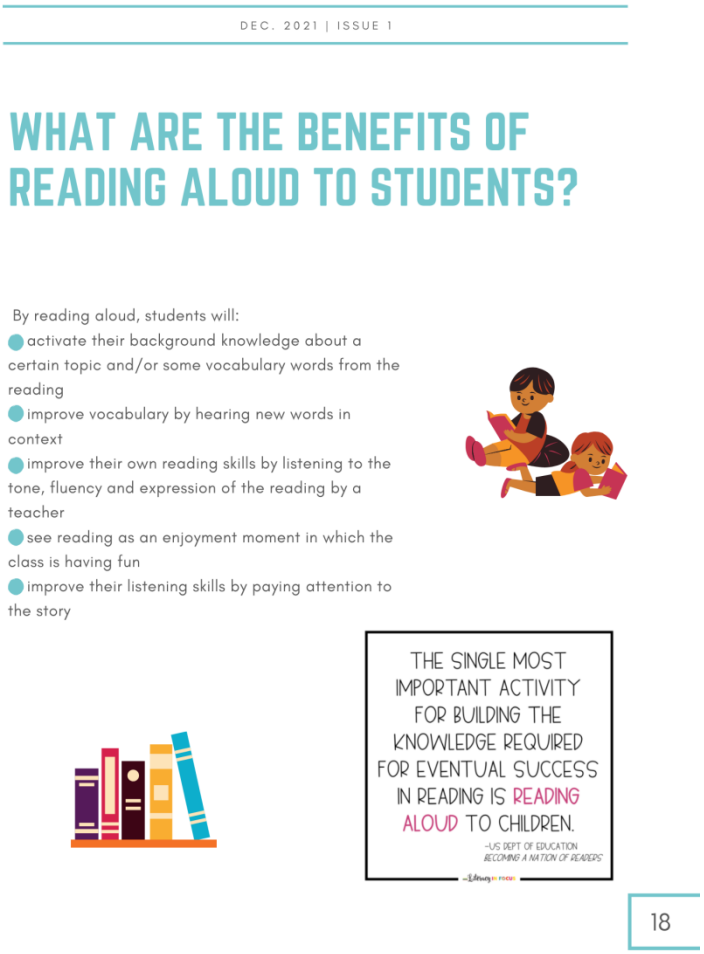
Figure 4.15

Figure 4.16 explains the benefits that reading aloud has on students and why teachers should start incorporating this strategy into their English as a second language reading lessons.



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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF READING ALOUD TO STUDENTS?

By reading aloud, students will:

- activate their background knowledge about a certain topic and/or some vocabulary words from the reading
- improve vocabulary by hearing new words in context
- improve their own reading skills by listening to the tone, fluency and expression of the reading by a teacher
- see reading as an enjoyment moment in which the class is having fun
- improve their listening skills by paying attention to the story

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY FOR BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED FOR EVENTUAL SUCCESS IN READING IS READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN.

–US DEPT OF EDUCATION
BECOMING A NATION OF READERS

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Figure 4.16

The next page (Figure 4.17) states how teachers can encourage students to read independently after daily reading aloud.

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HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MY STUDENTS TO READ INDEPENDENTLY AFTER READING ALOUD?

Reading aloud is the most effective strategy to develop children's reading skills.

- model mistakes so students realize that even good readers can make mistakes
- choose books wisely, relate your reading aloud with books available at your room for independent reading by students
- place your big books from reading aloud in a spot where students can also go and read them any time
- create activities related to the topic of the reading aloud that encourages students to look for more information and/or read the bog book again

19

Figure 4.17

Strategy #8: Practice pronunciation (Figure 4.18).

Practicing pronunciation is an important and effective strategy to promote reading in younger students. Why is it important? Because if students practice pronunciation of the words that appear in the book, then they will not feel ashamed to read in their groups or to the teacher.

At the bottom of the page teachers can find ideas of activities to practice pronunciation such as songs and show-and-tell. These activities help students to be more confident with their reading pronunciation.

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STRATEGY #8

Practice pronunciation

The classroom is a perfect environment to practice oral skills, teachers can organize their classrooms in ways that encourages:

- social interaction
- comprehensible input
- comprehensible output

Practicing pronunciation students may feel less ashamed to read out loud during a group reading session.

Pronunciation activities create a social interaction matrix from which language acquisition begins to grow.

Ideas of activities to work on English pronunciation

- Readers theater
- Podcasts
- Circle time
- Pronunciation games
- Songs
- Show and Tell

20

Figure 4.18

Strategy #9: Incorporate Games to Check for Understanding (Figure 4.19).

This strategy shows how teachers can use games to support students reading comprehension and why this is important to motivate students. On this page there are ideas from activities that promote reading comprehension through games. At the bottom of the page we can also find a web page which offers different types of games to check for understanding after a reading.

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STRATEGY #9

Incorporate games to check for understanding

Invite students to share their own responses, favorite part of the story, or discuss main ideas with a game will make them feel engage with the reading. Some ideas for after reading activities would be:

- dice with comprehension questions
- a board game that includes characters and important facts
- drawing to retell story
- sticks with questions or characters about the story
- exit slips
- Kahoot games
- puppet show
- classroom TED talks
- collage

Checking for comprehension using games that involves peers create opportunities for learning from other students.

Learning by playing make the acquisition of a new knowledge more meaningful and memorable. Check this webpage for more ideas https://www.weareteachers.com/ways-to-check-for-understanding/

21

Figure 4.19

The next page (Figure 4.20) shows four different games that teachers can easily implement in their classes, such as the strategy of the traffic light game which playfully prompts students to say what happened at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the story. Another game is for the teachers to throw a ball to the class, and students need to respond according to the question written on the ball. Another technique is to use dice and a chart to answer comprehension questions about the text, and the last technique is a board game where students can play in groups and talk about the book.

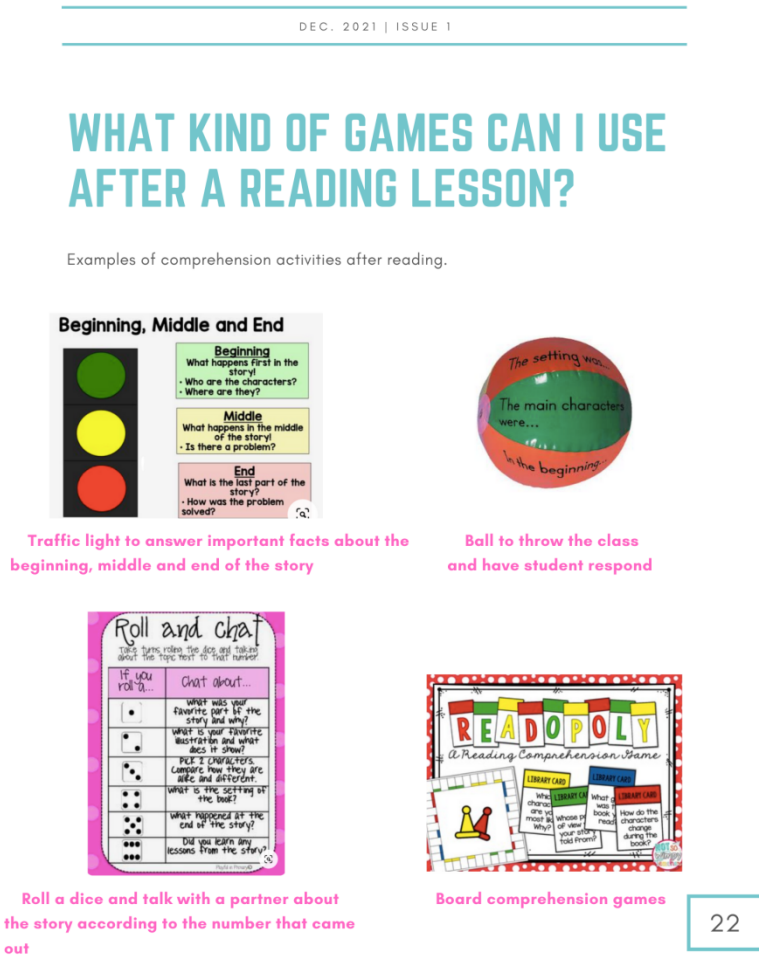
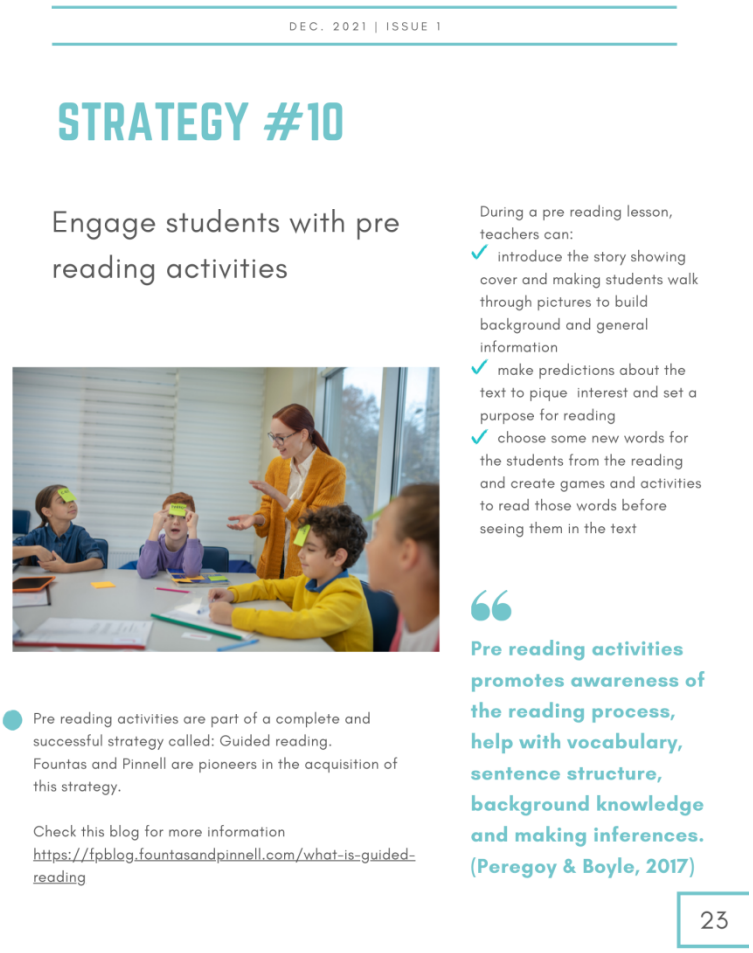


Figure 4.20

Strategy 10: Engage Students with Pre-Reading Activities (Figure 4.21).

This strategy is presented because of the importance of pre-reading activities to support reading. Pre reading activities engage students with the text and help them understand the story. This page explains how teachers can do pre reading activities. There are additional ideas of how to work with a book before reading it.

At the bottom of the page there is a web page from Fountas and Pinnell about how Guided Reading works and why pre reading activities are an important part of this technique.



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STRATEGY #10

Engage students with pre reading activities

During a pre reading lesson, teachers can:

- ✓ introduce the story showing cover and making students walk through pictures to build background and general information
- ✓ make predictions about the text to pique interest and set a purpose for reading
- ✓ choose some new words for the students from the reading and create games and activities to read those words before seeing them in the text

Pre reading activities are part of a complete and successful strategy called: Guided reading. Fountas and Pinnell are pioneers in the acquisition of this strategy.

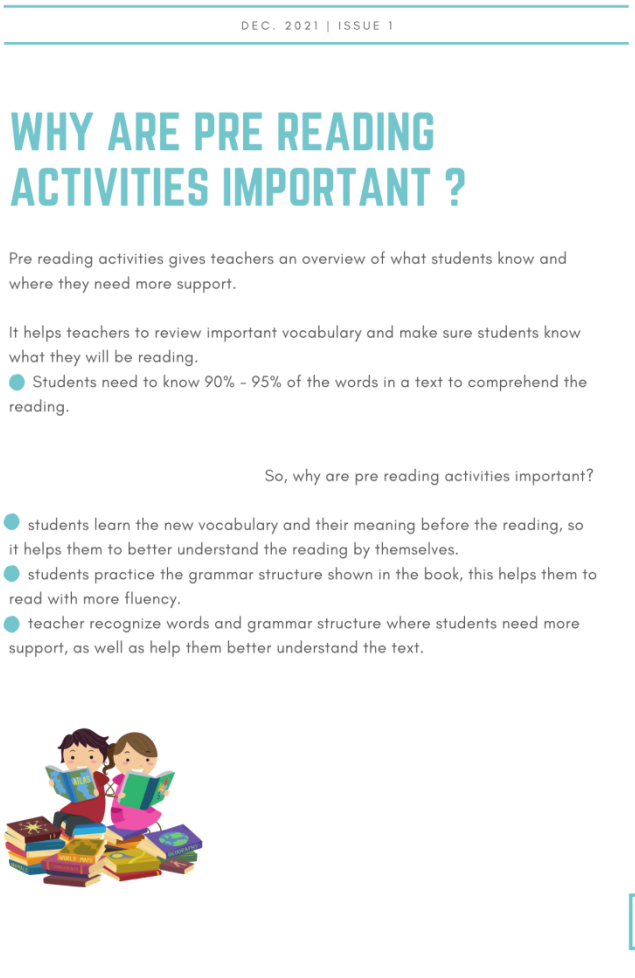
Check this blog for more information https://fpblog.fountasandpinnell.com/what-is-guided-reading

Pre reading activities promotes awareness of the reading process, help with vocabulary, sentence structure, background knowledge and making inferences. (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

23

Figure 4.21

The next page (Figure 4.22) explains in more detail why working with a book before reading is important, and it also shows that students need to know around 90% to 95% of the words in the book to understand it. Figure 4.23 for its part shows an example or a pre reading activity.



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WHY ARE PRE READING ACTIVITIES IMPORTANT ?

Pre reading activities gives teachers an overview of what students know and where they need more support.

It helps teachers to review important vocabulary and make sure students know what they will be reading.

- Students need to know 90% - 95% of the words in a text to comprehend the reading.

So, why are pre reading activities important?

- students learn the new vocabulary and their meaning before the reading, so it helps them to better understand the reading by themselves.
- students practice the grammar structure shown in the book, this helps them to read with more fluency.
- teacher recognize words and grammar structure where students need more support, as well as help them better understand the text.

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Figure 4.22

AN EXAMPLE OF A PRE ACTIVITY

Be an explorer and look for treasures

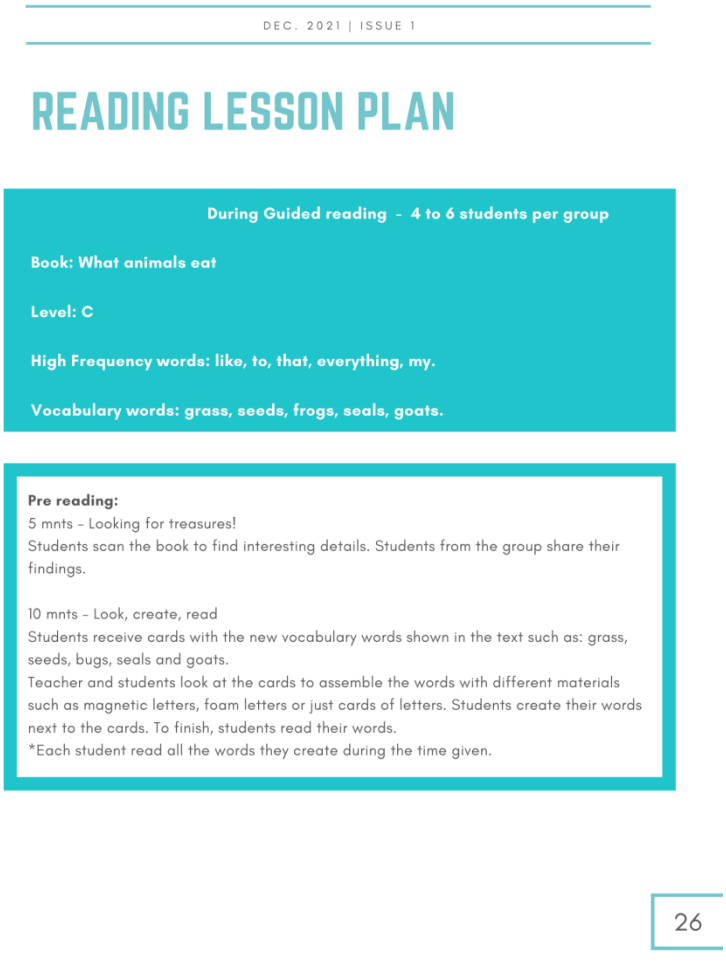
Strategy:
Look for a book that seems interesting for you, look at the cover. See the pages as an explorer and look for treasures in every page. Treasures are interesting details and/or facts that you did not know.

Book level:
From emergent to Level D

Type of text:
Any text (with pictures)

Skills:
Interest, strength and persistence.

Figure 4.23



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READING LESSON PLAN

During Guided reading - 4 to 6 students per group

Book: What animals eat

Level: C

High Frequency words: like, to, that, everything, my.

Vocabulary words: grass, seeds, frogs, seals, goats.

Pre reading:
5 mnts - Looking for treasures!
Students scan the book to find interesting details. Students from the group share their findings.

10 mnts - Look, create, read
Students receive cards with the new vocabulary words shown in the text such as: grass, seeds, bugs, seals and goats.
Teacher and students look at the cards to assemble the words with different materials such as magnetic letters, foam letters or just cards of letters. Students create their words next to the cards. To finish, students read their words.
*Each student read all the words they create during the time given.

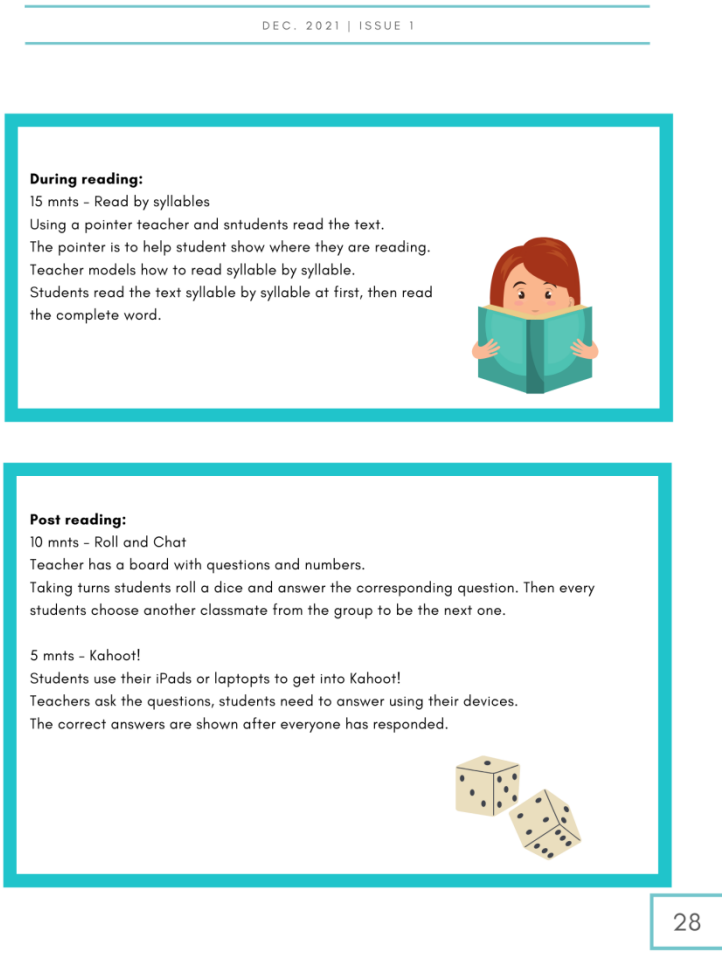
26

Figure 4.24

The last section of the e-book provides an example reading lesson plan that incorporates the strategies promoted here (Figure 4.24 and 4.26). The lesson plan is for a 45-minute guided reading class. The audience is first grade English as a second language students at reading level D.

Figure 4.25 shows the vocabulary cards used to work on the second pre reading activity during guided reading groups.

Figure 4.25



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During reading:
15 mnts - Read by syllables
Using a pointer teacher and sntudents read the text.
The pointer is to help student show where they are reading.
Teacher models how to read syllable by syllable.
Students read the text syllable by syllable at first, then read the complete word.

Post reading:
10 mnts - Roll and Chat
Teacher has a board with questions and numbers.
Taking turns students roll a dice and answer the corresponding question. Then every students choose another classmate from the group to be the next one.

5 mnts - Kahoot!
Students use their iPads or laptopts to get into Kahoot!
Teachers ask the questions, students need to answer using their devices.
The correct answers are shown after everyone has responded.

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Figure 4.26

Figure 4.27 and 4.28 show the board game used as a post reading activity to work during guided reading groups.

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ROLL AND CHAT

●	What do frogs like to eat?
● ●	What is the goat eating at the end of the book?
● ● ●	What is the monkey eating?
● ● ● ●	What animal is eating grass?
● ● ● ● ●	What do pandas like to eat?
● ● ● ● ● ●	What does goats like to eat?

Figure 4.27

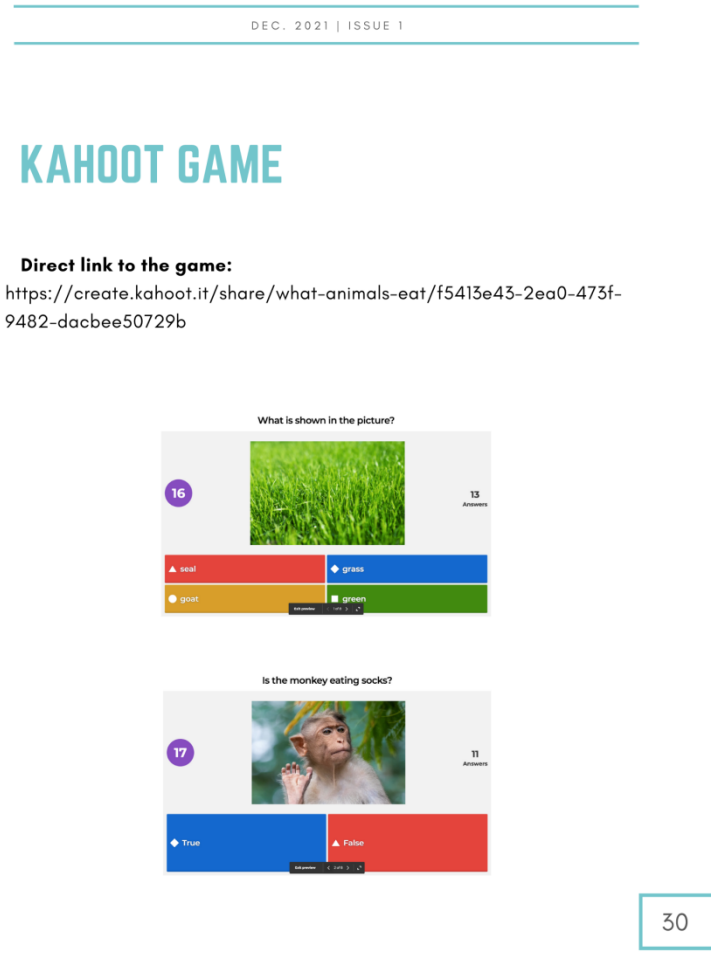

Figure 4.28

The *Kahoot!* post-reading activity will be used during the second post-reading activity during guided reading groups. The link to access the game is the following:

https://create.kahoot.it/share/what-animals-eat/f5413e43-2ea0-473f-9482-dacbee50729b

The last part of the e-book is an appendix where the leveled book used in the plan is shown.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Teaching young children the importance of reading in a second language and motivating them to do it is an enormous challenge. This challenge is faced not only by beginning teachers but also experienced teachers who may have difficulties engaging their students to read in a second language.

My motivation for researching this topic was to learn new strategies for motivating my students to read and/or to improve how I employ the strategies that I already knew. I intended to implement them in my classes, share them with my colleagues and support my work as a second language teacher. During my research, I learned and realized how important it is to pay attention to the background of every student, to understand the best way to work with them and engage them in reading in English, as well as to include families in the literacy process of their children.

Young students need constant support to engage in and feel motivated to read in an L2. Young students' attention spans are no more than 15 minutes - time that teachers need to use as wisely as possible to teach and motivate them. Different students may engage in reading by different strategies, and this is the reason why I created an e-book with 10 of the best strategies that I found during my research. These strategies will help teachers think and plan their reading lessons, as they reflect on the needs of every one of their students and what would work better with their L2 classes.

Reading in English as a second language is a great strategy for improving second language skills, and it is the most valuable time during ESL classes. Reading in a second language is not just reading, per se; it is also an opportunity to incorporate the learning of

new vocabulary that is useful to the daily lives of second language learners. As students read, and

comprehend what they read, they incorporate new knowledge with old and learn to see the world in new ways.

I would like to see this project inside my ESL colleagues' classrooms as a resource to look at when they are in need of support. I hope that every teacher can find the best strategy to support English reading in their students and can find the best way to motivate them. I also hope that every teacher who uses the e-book will adapt the strategies mentioned in it for their classes. Learning how to best motivate our students is a continuous process. I hope that my e-book serves as a starting point for teachers, where they can incorporate new ideas, and reconsider some assumptions that do not work for them, because practice is the best evidence to check what works for us and our students.

As a personal objective, my intent to write this thesis is to support my own practices as an L2 teacher who sees reading as one of the most important methodologies to teach a second language, and to use these strategies with my young students to promote reading motivation during their education.

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